MEMORIAL TRIBUTE
to
OTIS A. HOOD
(1900-1983)

JANUARY 29th - SUNDAY
AFTERNOON at 2

ARLINGTON STREET CHURCH
531 Boylston St.
Corner: Boylston & Arlington Sts. Boston
(At Arlington T Stop - Green Line)

Otis Archer Hood was a native son of Massachusetts, tracing his ancestry to the settlers who came on the Mayflower. His grandfather fought in the Civil War against the slave-owners. Otis carried on the family tradition when he joined the Communist Party in 1934, and led the struggle here for Unemployment Insurance, which became law in 1935.

Otis Hood ran for Governor of Massachusetts on the Communist Party ticket four consecutive times from 1936 to 1942. He also ran for Boston School Committee four times from 1943 to 1949, receiving 27,000 votes in 1945.

In 1951 the State Legislature passed a bill outlawing the Communist Party. Hood challenged the law as being unconstitutional. In 1954 Otis and five other Communists locally were arrested under the State Anti-Anarchy Law. The Boston police also arrested the books in Otis Hood's home. It took two police vans to haul the books to the Police Station where they were locked up in a couple of jail cells. It took a Court order to have the books returned to Otis.

In 1956 Hood and six other Massachusetts Communists were arrested under the federal thought-control Smith Act. The following year all these charges were dropped for lack of evidence.

In 1964, Otis was among 44 Communists nationally, who were ordered to register under the notorious McCarran Act, which provided a $10,000 fine and 5 years in jail for every day of non-compliance. President Truman vetoed this Act, but it was not until 1966 that the Supreme Court dismissed all the charges.

Otis Hood, like the Abolitionists of the previous century, always spoke his mind. He did not equivocate. He always stood up for democratic rights for all people. He worked for the unity of the working class, and for Socialism.

We honor his life today. He was an outstanding citizen of Massachusetts.

Contributions in Otis Hood's memory will be gratefully accepted for his favorite newspaper—the *Daily World*.

Otis Archer Hood - Born in Abington, Mass. in 1900. Life long resident of Massachusetts. He traces his ancestry back to the 1600's; and is a direct descendant of Robert Cushman. His ancesters fought in the revolution of 1776 for American independence, and in the civil war to preserve the Union and abolish chattel slavery. His parents were shoe workers. Otis put himself through The Massachusetts School of Art with money he earned in the summers. In the 1920's he became a talented sculptor. His work can be seen in various churches and public buildings.

During the depression of the 1930's our young sculptor Otis suffered joblessness like millions of other Americans. One day while walking thru the Boston Common he heard a speaker who seemed to have some answers. It was May Day, and the speaker said that May Day originated in the struggle for the 8 hour day here in the USA. He also talked about the campaign going on for federal unemployment insurance and social security at the expense of the Government and the employers. Otis Hood was a member of the Plasterers Union, Local 10, and he joined the struggle for unemployment Insurance. He became one of the most effective organizers among the jobless workers in Massachusetts. He organized a rank and file committee among the AFL Locals in Massachusetts. Nationally such/Committees succeeded in getting the 1934 National Convention of the AFL to pass such a resolution.

Otis Hood joined the Communist Party in 1934, and became its most able spokesman. He ran for Governor of Massachusetts on the Communist Party ticket 4 times. He also ran for the Boston School Committee, getting 27,000 votes in 1943. He was elected State Chairman of the Communist Party of Massachusetts, and served in that post for some 40 years. He was an imposing figure, and commanded attention when he appeared before Legislative Committees in defense of workers's rights. He denounced anti-Communism whenever and wherever it was raised.

When the Massachusetts Legislature passed an anti-Communist law in 1951, Otis Hood challenged it in the courts as being un-Constitutional and detrimental to the entire Labor Movement. He was supported by such organizations as the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Jewish Congress, the Progressive Party, National Lawyers Guild and others. It was not until 1956 that the indictment against Otis was declared null and void, and the legal status of the Communist Party was restored. Hood was among those Communists indicted under Smith Act + also ordered to register under McCarran Law? Neither case proceed in Mass.

Otis Hood was often referred to in the press as the best known Communist in Massachusetts. He died in 1984. Anne Sadowski wrote a poem about him.

His wife, Frances Hood headed up the Defense Committee during the Smith Act trials in the 1950's.

A Man of the People

for Otis A. Hood

There are men born
and men that live.
Those who dream
and those who work the earth.
Children resisting night's pull into sleep,
or the tired and lonely who wake each morning
with regret for the passing of time.

And then there are workers
of the struggle.
Artists who take earth
and mold it with the right idea
to make something for the people.

Like sculptors
they touch the future with their hands
and give it shape.
Workers of dreams.

This was such a man.
A sculptor of the people
cut from history
from a family rejecting tyranny
who would sail across an ocean
for liberty.

This man would carry on the tradition.
The American way.
The workers way
to seek truth and dignity
and to fight for what is right.

This man stood tall
among us
with convictions of stone
an optimist always
his eyes on the light
in the darkness-
that beacon of freedom
calling us to fight
for something better.

A man of the people
arrested
yet never silenced.
The life he sought
was the life he lived
was struggle
for peace
for the people
was food and work
was democracy
struggle always
and only with the people in mind.

The life he lived
was a struggle of ideas
for the people to grasp
to understand
we can take hold of the present
and make it work for us
for Socialism.

A simple man.
A profound man.
A teacher
Always a student.

Husband, Father,
Trade union brother,
Communist, Comrade,
Friend,

We honor you today
with a pledge to carry on
the tradition.

We, workers of the struggle know
a man of the people
never leaves them
but steps softly aside
patiently urges us on
to meet the challenge
of history
for the people
for the class
for the future itself.

Anne Sadowski
January 29, 1984